

DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

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CHP HIGHLIGHTS BUCKLE UP AMERICA! WEEK MAY 19 - 23, 1997

The California Highway Patrol (CHP) will take part in the “Buckle Up America! Week” from May 19 - 23, 1997. This national campaign is an annual reminder of the magnitude of the lifesaving potential of safety belts and an effort to strongly encourage all motorists to use safety belts and child safety seats on every trip.

“Although the awareness of safety belts has significantly increased during the past few years, it’s still not enough. People are still dying on our highways because they didn’t take the three seconds needed to buckle up,” said CHP Commissioner Dwight Helmick.

During “Buckle Up America! Week,” the CHP wants to stress the importance of using safety belts even if your car is equipped with an airbag. “For the best possible protection, use the ‘winning combination’ of safety belts and air bags. And remember, if you have passenger-side air bags, don’t place small children in the front seat,” Commissioner Helmick said.

Safety belt use for adults in the United States stands at merely 68 percent. Only 60 percent of children ride restrained in safety belts or child safety seats, however, experts estimate that 80 percent of the children who are placed in child safety seats are not properly restrained. In addition, 60 percent of the children under the age of five who are killed in crashes nationwide are unrestrained.

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This year's "Buckle Up America! Week" will include enhanced efforts on the part of the CHP to increase compliance with California child passenger restraint and safety belt laws. "More children and adults buckled up on every ride means fewer crash-related injuries or deaths, which translates into healthier families and a stronger America," concluded Commissioner Helmick.

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